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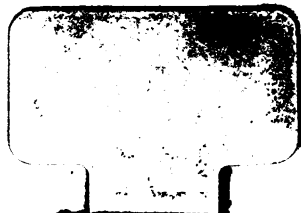
THE BRUNSWICK.

A POEM.



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# THE BRUNSWICK.





**THE BRUNSWICK.**

**LONDON :**  
**PRINTED BY S. AND R. BENTLEY.**  
Dorset Street, Fleet Street.

1829  
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# THE BRUNSWICK:

A POEM.

IN THREE CANTOS.

"FALLEN, FALLEN, FALLEN, FALLEN."

DRYDEN.



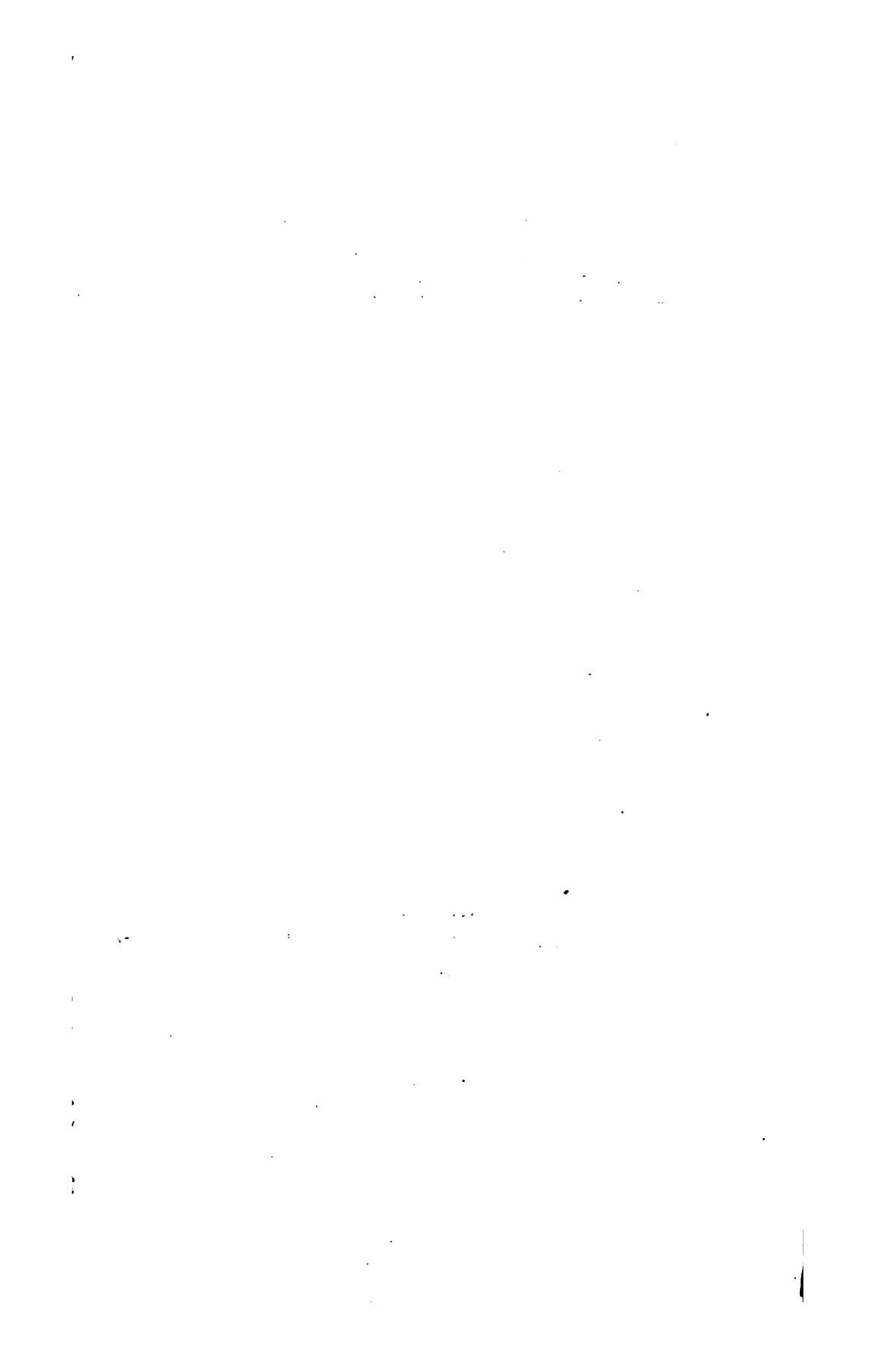
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LONDON:

WILLIAM MARSH, OXFORD STREET.

1829.

635.



# THE BRUNSWICK.

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## CANTO I.

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### I.

COME thou sweet straggling desultory rhyme,  
Which Byron, great immortal of our day,  
Took for the solace of his latter time,  
Wherein to weave the mournful and the gay,  
Delight, despair, pain, pleasure, good, or crime,  
Within the magic circle of his lay,  
Blest octave measure, boundless in variety,  
Full of all charms, and free from all satiety !

## II.

Yes, I will follow where the mighty went—

Albeit there may not glow within my page  
The passions in their fatal fury spent—

The workings of the reckless in their rage—  
The droopings of the heart with anguish rent—

Nor charm of love, which can all breasts engage:  
On plainer themes, and in an humbler strain,  
The octave verse may not be writ in vain.

## III.

O rambling Muse, by thee and Fancy led,

Through various scenes it is my joy to pass,  
And see each object, wheresoe'er I tread,

Reflected in thy strain as in a glass.  
No lady's reticule, nor e'en her head,

Things which all others in their kind surpass,  
Can promise more variety of pleasure,  
Than doth the page that's clad in thy sweet measure.

## IV.

Byron a *hero* found as soon as wanted,

And such a bright, romantic, brave, and true one,  
That all his loves and wand'rings seem enchanted,

And all that's charming is summ'd up in Juan;—  
But I, for fear such wish may not be granted,

And feeling it right hard to find a new one,  
Must strive against the fashion, and try whether  
I cannot do without one altogether.

## V.

But then, a *subject* yet unwritten on

Is not a thing to find just when one chooses.  
I look'd through all our age hath seen and done,

But much that's famed on earth the Muse refuses;  
I thought about the "Days of Wellington,"

But that vast theme is far beyond the Muses;  
I thought about the glorious Constitution,  
In these hard times of struggle and confusion:



## VI.

But here the Muse put on a scornful smile,  
Although I had indited, as I ought,  
Much rant about the venerable pile,  
For which our ancestors have bled and fought.  
I thought about "The women of our Isle,"  
But their transcendant beauty passes thought;  
And though it may and must all bosoms melt,  
It is a subject only to be felt.

## VII.

I thought about the Russians, and the Turks,  
And hard heads knock'd about on horrid plains,  
But there have been already learned works,  
That teach us to blow out each other's brains;  
And writers will have need of all their quirks  
To make us feel, whichever party gains,  
Between our old friends and our new connections,  
Much matter for agreeable reflections.

## VIII.

The "March of Intellect" upon me burst,  
But there is one enquiry I would make,  
Which way our intellects are marching first ;  
Besides, my readers might not keep awake ;  
So, lastly, whether for the best or worst  
I know not, but I have resolv'd to take  
A certain Theatre, which met its fate  
By falling down the third day from its date.

## IX.

But first, oh all you readers that are grac'd  
With feelings fine, I beg, entreat, implore you,  
Not to impute to me a want of taste,  
In verifying this too real story :  
You cannot tax me with indecent haste,  
In bringing all its dread details before you ;  
But a whole year of mourning being gone,  
(E'en widows ask no longer,) pray go on.

## X.

Reader, the house of Brunswick is no more !

Now, I beseech thee, torture not thyself

With fears that Brunswick's royal line is o'er,

The root of many a wise and glorious Guelf ;

No such affliction have we to deplore,—

'Tis not extinct, nor even on the shelf ;

No fall of theirs I trumpet forth to Fame,

Only a Theatre, that bore their name.

## XI.

" Dimidium facti qui cœpit," et cætera,

Said Horace wisely, which, when understood

In English, means that he who can but get o'er a

Beginning has made half his journey good :

In the mean time, as I can find no better a

Mode than to tell you where our building stood,

The foreground and the front of my narration

Shall be a word about its situation.

---

## XII.

This Theatre stood somewhere in the city,  
Out by the Minories, or Ratcliffe Highway,  
Or,—God knows where !—it really is a pity  
To place a Theatre in such a by-way ;  
Howe'er it might be novel, gay, or pretty,  
No one would go,—at least, no one in my way  
Would go to such a quarter of the town  
To see it,—but no matter—now it's down.

## XIII.

Our Theatres are chiefly built in places  
Where pleasant objects with each other vie  
In banishing th' uncomfortable traces  
Of all unquiet from the gazer's eye,  
Presenting in their stead gay smiling faces,  
Luxurious equipages gliding by,  
Folks loit'ring near, or lounging in at leisure,  
And all things round wearing a look of pleasure.

## XIV.

So stand the Little Theatre, and the King's,  
    (But, why, O King ! it should be called thine  
Is one of those extraordinary things  
    I never yet could learn nor can divine,  
Seeing thy gracious presence never wings  
    Its way there ; but it 's no affair of mine ;)  
So stand those jealous envious sisters twain,  
Of Covent-Garden and of Drury-Lane.

## XV.

But this was rear'd amidst a world of cares,  
    Where all unsightly things the ways were stopping ;  
It stood 'midst warehouses, and wharfs, and wares,  
    Midst scenes of trading, trafficking, and shopping,  
Haunts which the river with the city shares,  
    A dingy land, half Birmingham, half Wapping,  
Quite out of Pleasure's way, you would suppose ;—  
But she into strange holes and corners goes.

## XVI.

One might have thought the God of Dissipation—

If that there be such a celestial wight  
Among the Deities of any nation—

Had rais'd himself a house up for the night,  
Not choosing to return on some occasion,

To his own gaudy palaces of Light,—  
So much this charming edifice was seep,  
Looking o'er all about it like a Queen—

## XVII.

A most Aladdin-like and sweet affair ;

Aladdin-like the manner of its popping  
Up into sight ; Aladdin-like when there ;

Aladdin-like the manner of its hopping  
Off,—only that Aladdin's rose in air,

While our poor Brunswick disappear'd by dropping,  
And that Aladdin, being very clever,  
Fetch'd back his palace,—ours is gone for ever.

## XVIII.

Now as to Architecture, for my part  
I find it difficult at thirty-five  
To learn the terms of science or of art,  
Not having stor'd of knowledge quite a hive  
At Cambridge, where I only learnt by heart  
Some Mathematics and the way to drive.  
I mean to study at the King's new College,  
And then come out a man of general knowledge.

## XIX.

I say the King's, for fear you should suppose  
I mean that horrid thing the London U-  
niversity, where every body knows,  
They keep religion wholly out of view,  
Not deeming it expedient, as time goes,  
To preach about her, howsoever true ;  
Whereas at the King's College, all our youth  
Are to be finish'd in religious truth.

## XX.

The London University, I'm told,  
Hath chosen for the seat of its renown,  
What I should call, if I might be so bold,  
The easy-virtuous quarter of the town,  
Where ladies light a frolic empire hold ;  
'Tis there that these grave Dons have settled down,  
Convenient for professors and for students,  
Whose knowledge may be greater than their prudence.

## XXI.

For you, King's College, it seems doubtful yet,  
So many have been pitch'd on for thy site,  
What place, or whether any place, you'll get.  
I heard the Regent's Park, the other night ;  
If so, our curious monsters will be met  
All in one place—an interesting sight ;  
And we may rove from samples of Zoology,  
To perfect specimens of pure Theology.



## XXII.

Digressing thus at first will never do ;—  
Some score of stanzas and yet no advance  
Made in our Brunswick story ;—to say true,  
I love a devious path that winds askance,  
And hate to keep one object still in view ;  
The flow'rs are fragrant that we find by chance,  
And both in nature and in life I'd rather  
Have those I meet than those I come to gather.

## XXIII.

But to proceed. The building was of those  
Which, simply grand, afford a chaste delight.  
Before its front twelve stately pillars rose  
Of solid structure and majestic height,  
Which on a base of marble did repose ;  
And just above the pillars, less in sight,  
In large old Roman characters, the date  
Stood simply, " Eighteen hundred Twenty-eight."

## XXIV.

Such was the Theatre outside,—th' interior  
Was just the very thing you 'd wish to find it.  
And after all, what signifies exterior ?  
As people say, (and yet they always mind it :)  
The whole was finish'd in a style superior,  
And both before the curtain and behind it,  
The arrangements (that 's the fashionable phrase)  
Were all deserving of the highest praise.

## XXV.

The box tiers were emblazon'd, as they're wont,  
With decorations beauteous to behold ;  
The first had paintings of the Muses on 't ;  
A honeysuckle pattern, wreath'd in gold,  
The second grac'd ; and on the gallery's front,  
Emblem of those it was design'd to hold,  
United in a wreath continuous shone,  
The Thistle, Rose, and Shamrock, all in one.

## XXVI.

A splendid lustre from the centre hung,  
With glass and gas distracting dazzled views,—  
Figures of infant Genii seem'd flung  
Around the border, tasteful, yet profuse,—  
In front a lyre, on antique model strung,  
Between the Comic and the Tragic Muse,  
Form'd three compartments, all in high relief,  
Appropriate types of Music, Mirth, and Grief.

## XXVII.

Then there were lumber-rooms, of course, and scene-  
rooms,  
Close parlours suiting managerial pride,  
And dressing-rooms, and music-rooms, and green-rooms,  
Where young stage-beauties might be closely spied;  
And strange odd holes for waiting left between rooms;  
And last, a handsome portico outside  
Ran cased in bronze, and *chas'd* (not *chaste*) with gilding,  
Like many a modern Duchess, round the building.

## XXVIII.

This was a place from which you might discover  
All things play-going people would command,  
Upon occasions, when the play is over,  
And suited ladies of all kinds to stand,  
When looking for a carriage or a lover,  
Or—whatsoever else might come to hand :  
And so this portico served, helter-skelter,  
For all who shelter'd love, or who lov'd shelter.

## XXIX.

He that would see much life in little space,  
Should view, by night, a theatre's outside ;  
Men of all classes, knowing each their place,  
The plund'rer, and the plunder'd, side by side ;  
Link-boys and lords, your servant, and your grace,  
Meanness and splendour, beggary and pride ;  
Here the fine lady in her silks and satins,  
There the poor girl that tramps along in pattens.

## XXX.

There you may hear a thousand people bawling  
In language not of elegant reproach ;  
Fellows who coaches call, and, in their calling  
Seem to call any thing but " Coach, coach, coach !"  
Coachmen, their horses pulling, slashing, hauling,  
Just where their mistresses can *not* approach—  
One thing there is, which always makes me glad,  
That it 's soon over—else they must go mad.

## XXXI.

Sometimes when I behold the roaring, reeling  
People, and all these signs of human folly,  
I rise into a pure Wordsworthian feeling,  
A transport of exalted melancholy ;  
Then look I up into the starry ceiling,  
And lose myself in meditation wholly ;  
Sigh as I stand amid the carriage-poles,  
And ask myself, " Have all these people souls ?"

## XXXII.

But to return :—There was a gen'ral fear  
Lest fire should lay this ill-starr'd building low ;  
And so all arts were tried the house to clear,  
And patent pipes sent water from below ;  
And it might seem perhaps a little queer,  
(If any thing in this world could seem so,)   
That they should aim their efforts one and all  
Against a fire, but none against a fall.

## XXXIII.

We shun one evil while another kills :  
None saw the danger of the coming morn.  
And oh ! how Destiny, as she fulfils  
The fates of men, must laugh their ways to scorn,  
Seeing them guard against all other ills,  
All save th' appointed one to which they 're born ;  
While that fast held within her mighty grasp  
They ne'er elude, but almost seem to clasp !

## XXXIV.

An iron roof, the cause of all their woe,  
Did, being novel, ev'ry eye engage ;  
Smooth and serene it smil'd on all below,  
Spreading its fatal snare o'er pit and stage ;  
Smooth as a ruffian ere he strikes the blow,  
Smooth as the sea ere storms begin to rage,  
Or lady's face ere anger's sudden ravage,  
Or aught which quickly turns from calm to savage.

## XXXV.

Such was the building :—would I could recall  
As easily the first night's hopes and wishes.  
A Methodist just going to have a call,  
A patriot pouncing on the loaves and fishes,  
A nice young lady going to a ball,  
An alderman anticipating dishes,  
May form some notion of the expectation  
That fill'd all London East on that occasion.

## XXXVI.

The ev'ning came—all ev'nings will at last,  
If you 'll but wait—a fact which they should know  
Whose young hearts bent on pleasure beat too fast,—  
And being come, they will as surely go.  
The parts were ready, just as they were cast,  
The house was crowded to an overflow,  
The lamps shone out, so did the fiddlers too,  
Tinkled the bell, and up the curtain flew !

## XXXVII.

And the Stage-Manager pour'd forth his strain  
Of admiration, (a whole hecatomb,)  
Love, and respect, and honour, such as men  
Must feel for some two thousand others, whom  
They never saw before, or may again,  
Wishing a thousand years might be their doom,  
And hoping they would only please to smile,  
And patronize the Brunswick all the while ;



## XXXVIII.

And promising them his perpetual care  
To study objects worthy of their taste—  
Their taste ! the thing with which that compound rare  
A British public is supremely grac'd,  
So much so they quite breathe it like their air.  
Wishing all this, while in his reach were placed  
But two small days—a thing to make one ponder  
On human wishes—but I must not wander.

## XXXIX.

The first night pass'd off quietly, although  
Some saw a crack, and some strange noises heard :  
So then the place was re-survey'd, and so  
All further thoughts of danger were absurd.  
Next morning came rehearsal, and then no  
New symptoms were perceiv'd, nor aught averr'd  
Whereat a prudent man might be perplex'd,  
And that day all was tranquil—but the next !

## XL.

The busy folks connected with the place  
Were all assembled on that luckless day,  
Heroes and heroines, a motley race,  
Their bus'ness being to rehearse a play,  
And you might read in many a laughing face  
The lines of merriment—when, sooth to say,  
One whose decree admits of no reversal  
Play'd off his tragedy without rehearsal.

## XLI.

This is a subject for a poet now—  
The King of Terrors in the halls of pleasure,  
The cypress wreath upon the glowing brow,  
The bowl at hand, and Fate to fill the measure,  
Turning our theatres to tombs : I vow  
I 'll pen some sep'rate stanzas on 't at leisure—  
Love shall inspire, Youth shall prepare the sport,  
Beauty shall smile,—but Death dissolve the court.

## XLII.

Well, there they stood ; and strange it is to see .

This sort of people in their morning dresses—  
They look so little like what they would be ;

View them at night, 'twould baffle all your guesses  
To recognize each painted he or she—

Well, there they stood, and, as my verse expresses,  
Prepar'd for spouting, singing, dancing, humming,  
In short for any thing—but what was coming.

## XLIII.

And what was coming ?—I will tell you what—

A slight small crack was seen, and then a rumbling  
Was heard above, which somewhat marr'd their chat,

And ere they could enquire what meant this grumbling  
Strange kind of noise, with no more signs than that .

Which I have mention'd, the whole roof came tumbling  
Down in an instant with a crash like thunder,  
Whelming and burying whatsoe'er was under.

## XLIV.

Then those who saw the peril that hung o'er  
Their heads, gaz'd on each other, and were hush'd ;  
And many were the shapes that terror wore,  
And faces were alternate pale and flush'd ;  
Then burst the general cry, suppress'd before,  
As mad with fear, scarce knowing where they rush'd,  
The miserable men one glance appalling  
Cast upward, and then sunk beneath the falling.

## XLV.

One moment and you might have witness'd here  
Music and mirth, and all the charms they gave ;  
Another chang'd and check'd that bright career,  
And shrieks were heard, but there was none to save ;  
All was despair—they had no time for fear,  
With but one step from pleasure to the grave.—  
Death was above them, round them, and beneath,  
And all they felt, and heard, and saw, was death.

## XLVI.

So fares it with the projects of this earth ;  
Years bring to pass—an instant may destroy.  
With trembling anxious hearts we watch their birth,  
And while hope glittering gilds the beauteous toy,  
Ev'n in the moment when we count its worth,  
Comes the dread fiend that mocks at human joy,  
And stamps at once his sport as well as spoil,  
Man and his work, the toiler and the toil !

## XLVII.

It was broad day, half past elev'n o'clock,  
Folks passing by outside, or walking in  
For places at the moment of the shock,  
When straight there burst upon them from within  
Their shrieks, who saw the roof begin to rock,  
Lost, soon as utter'd, in the general din,  
Which made, as you may well suppose it would,  
A vast sensation in the neighbourhood.

## XLVIII.

Some thought 'twas cannon firing for the day—  
The blessed day that sees some royal birth;  
A thing which makes our serious nation gay,  
And fills all bosoms with a heartfelt mirth;  
Some thought the ground had open'd for its prey—  
Some thought it was the last day of the earth;  
When Drury-lane was burnt they did the same,  
Then well they might—the sky was all on flame

## XLIX.

For many a league,—the season (midnight) heighten'd  
The horror that was everywhere install'd,  
And gentle ladies on that night were frighten'd,  
And found their maids (by courtesy so call'd)  
With faces pale as if they had been whiten'd,  
Preparing for that final blaze and scald  
Which will be—here without a moment's warning—  
And won't be—in the papers the next morning,

## L.

Because there 'll be no morning and no papers,  
A thought from which some curious questions flow ;  
As where this world will go with all its vapours —  
Whether we shall be blest, or but so so ?—  
Whether by daylight we shall live, or tapers ?—  
Whether we all shall one another know ?—  
What other worlds this world of ours will displace—  
And other things that don't belong to this place.

## LI.

The few, (some few there were,) whose gaze by chance  
Was fix'd, the very moment when it fell,  
Upon that building, saw the wall advance  
Suddenly outward with a fearful swell,  
And then stood staring in a sort of trance,  
From which they were arous'd by one wild yell,  
To see—no theatre, but in its place,  
A heap of ruins and an empty space.

## LII.

A theatre in ruins ! the mind flies

Back at the thought a thousand years and more,  
To where Verona never wholly dies,

But breathing classic and theatric lore,  
Reads from the dust of vanish'd centuries

Its lesson to the people of that shore ;  
Who gazing on it, listening to its story,  
Revive and emulate their ancient glory.

## LIII.

It flies to far-renowned times and lands :

To where the mighty Coliseum stood,  
The work of Roman minds, and Roman hands,

Its trophies, triumphs, and its combats rude ;—  
To where its shell in awful glory stands,

And marks, albeit in silent solitude,  
The spot where millions of that mighty name  
Gaz'd, shouted, wept, and learn'd the road to fame.



## LIV.

Alas ! in scenes like this there is an air  
Of hallowing softness breathes about the place,  
For Time has laid his hand so gently there,  
And the green ivy adds her mantling grace,  
That those who gaze upon them, while they spare  
One sigh in honour of that vanish'd race,  
Yet feel withal a melancholy charm,  
That ev'n in ruins can the soul disarm.

## LV.

So gradual seems decay, so softly breaks  
Its thought upon the heart, that if we weep  
'Tis not with pain ; and young Romance, who wakes  
And wanders forth to muse while others sleep,  
And views it by the sweet moonlight which makes  
All things seem lovelier in her radiance deep,  
Finds not in all the world a fairer sight—  
A feeling of more exquisite delight.

## LVI.

Beside some mansion tott'ring to its fall,  
That once bore witness to their ancient ways ;  
Or by some ruin'd arch, or crumbling wall,  
We seem to see the actors of past days ;  
While mellowing distance throws her dim gray pall  
O'er all their doubtful deeds of blame or praise ;  
And almost consecrates the very crimes,  
Whose action bears the stamp of other times.

## LVII.

The past ! What is it on this peopled earth  
That makes us dwell so fondly on the past ?  
Man sees the future, like a mine of worth,  
Unfold its treasures beautiful and vast,  
And scarce the present joy survives its birth,  
Lost in the lustre which those visions cast ;  
But wherefore with such deep emotion pore  
On men and scenes that shall return no more ?

## LVIII.

'Tis for that self-same reason that we gaze  
So fondly, that they never shall return ;  
They had their past and future, nights and days,  
Cares to feel, hopes to cherish, griefs to mourn ;  
They wander'd, as we wander, through the maze  
Of man's existence to its final bourn ;  
And we, exhal'd this petty, paltry breath,  
From the same life shall sink to the same death—

## LIX.

Leaving of our existence scarce a trace ;—  
But I digress—I only meant to state  
That Ruins have their own peculiar grace—  
Nor is 't alone of things inanimate  
That Ruin softens and improves the face ;  
I 've known a beauty of the haughtiest gait  
Give up the airs of which she had been quite full,  
And grow, by being ruin'd, quite delightful.

## LX.

But here was nought of beauty to redeem  
The wreck that glar'd around, above, below,  
Bearing resemblance to some hideous dream,  
Fram'd by imagination's fever'd glow ;  
Pillar lay heap'd on pillar, beam on beam,  
By that abrupt and instantaneous blow ;  
Without decay destruction, and beneath,  
In horrible variety, lay Death.

## LXI.

Wild was the scene, here rising in a heap  
Of things all scattering and uncemented ;  
There yawning downwards in a gulph as deep,  
Where some huge masses had the earth indented ;  
And a dread warmth o'er all was felt to creep,  
From fragments kindling in their fury vented ;  
Which fiercely met, and black'ning at the stroke,  
Sent forth a strange unnat'ral heat and smoke.

## LXII.

It was all over soon save with the wounded :

These scatter'd lay as murd'rous chance had dealt,  
And heavily the gen'ral murmur sounded ;

Some tott'ring stood, some pray'd, and feebly knelt ;  
Beneath the stifling mass some lay astounded,

Conscious of nothing but the pain they felt ;  
Sore struggled with his fate each mangled elf,  
And sympathy was swallow'd up in self.

## LXIII.

Oppress'd, o'erpow'r'd, half-breathing as they lay

Beneath a mass of ruins fall'n and falling,  
Through bruised bodies groping out their way  
Feebly, or faintly to each other calling,  
" Who were they !"—Men whose trade was to be gay.

Say what you will, it makes it more appalling  
To know they were the ministers of pleasure,  
And is a thing to muse on at one's leisure.

## LXIV.

Limbs, ownerless, were scattered all about. (1)

The few that did unhurt that scene survive  
Gaz'd each on other with a desperate doubt

If aught beside himself had scap'd alive ;  
Struggling to force a passage through the rout,  
They rise, they sink again, they strain, they strive,  
On many a breathing resting-place they tread,  
Or find a fearful footing on the dead.

## LXV.

And first a cloud of dust obscur'd the eye ;

But when they could their scatter'd sense recall,  
And looking upwards saw for roof the sky,

And glancing round beheld the tott'ring wall,  
And underneath their footing did espy

Men, women, friends, dead, dying, wounded, all  
Buried in one grim carnage and confusion,  
They *hop'd*—they *wish'd*—but *felt* 'twas not—delusion.

## LXVI.

"Surely we dream," is but a mode of diction ;  
The mad, or drunk, or they whom dreams excite  
May take for truth a phantom or a fiction,  
But there's a clear and overpowering light  
In truth itself that brings at once conviction,  
Stamping it on the mind, as on the sight,  
With a calm, cold, and sober sort of quality,  
That leaves no room to doubt of its reality.

## LXVII.

Hard is his heart, hard as that iron roof  
Which then came tumbling on that hapless crew,  
Who does not sicken when he sees such proof  
What chance or fate or evil stars may do :  
For me, I feel that I must keep aloof  
From such sad scenes—'twould cut my heart in two,  
And might besides disorder my digestion,  
If I should ask myself another question

## LXVIII.

About the matter—therefore, I'll no more  
Of horrible detailing for the present,  
But tell you what all people said and swore,  
A thing most edifying, also pleasant ;  
For people talk'd the matter o'er and o'er,  
And made amongst them a most curious mess on't :  
We'll touch in order all the diff'rent folks,  
Of course, beginning with the orthodox.

## LXIX.

But now some threescore stanzas being done,  
Part in a sad and sentimental vein,  
And part intended in the way of fun,  
'Tis time that I should check awhile my rein :  
This, therefore, is the end of Canto One,  
And ere I enter on my second strain,  
I'll meditate awhile, because to sing  
Of men's opinions is a dangerous thing.





# THE BRUNSWICK.

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## CANTO II.

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### I.

IN life, as in our voyages, there seems

One mighty moment when the truth comes o'er us ;

In life 'tis when the sweet home-shelter'd dreams

Of youth subside, and the world stands before us,  
The great, bold, busy world, with all its schemes :—

At sea, 'tis when we leave the wave which bore us  
All gently near the shore with tranquil motion,  
And feel the vast and undeniable ocean.

## II.

Some early rush into life's ocean—some  
    Bid later farewell to domestic joys ;  
But soon or late the hour is sure to come,  
    Which all our early bloom of heart destroys.  
Me ling'ring long in the sweet lap of home  
    Fancy and Hope long cheated with their voice ;  
Long kept me stranger to the sick'ning strife,  
And all the cold realities of life.

## III.

But ah ! full sure, the disenchanter came,  
    And all at once the fairy vision broke ;  
Hush'd was the voice of hope, the dream of fame,  
    And bright romance was shiver'd at the stroke ;  
The sounds I hear around me are the same,  
    But where the charm in ev'ry voice that spoke ?  
Gone, gone for ever with the light which shone  
Within my breast—the charm was there alone.

## IV.

What was my heart *before*?—a joyous dwelling,  
Whose chambers echoed to a sparkling throng,  
Where infant Hope his hundred tales was telling,  
While all the passions listen'd to his song;  
Where music on voluptuous gale was swelling,  
And life in one bright stream was borne along;  
Fancy was there, and Love his garlands wreathing,  
And all the flow'rs of life their sweets were breathing.

## V.

Behold it *after*—many a dreary token  
Is scatter'd o'er the halls where gladness rung,  
Gay garlands wither'd, and proud arches broken,  
And high-toned instruments of joy unstrung;  
And many a wish that was in rapture spoken  
Hath died away with thoughts no longer young;  
While tort'ring memory, like a gloomy ghost,  
Yet lingers there, and murmurs, "All is lost!"

## VI.

And then we rush into the great gay world,  
New-modelling our notions with our state,  
The flag of mental freedom is unfurl'd,  
And dipp'd in colours of our future fate,  
And old opinions from their thrones are hurl'd,  
Where they have lain for ages like old plate ;  
We melt them down, we mould them to our use,  
Strong as our feelings, various as our views.

## VII.

As on we march, the world a thousand ways  
Turns from the truth our wayward wand'ring view ;  
But most the giant Prejudice o'ersways ;  
With antique garb of many-colour'd hue,  
Time-rusted sceptre, eye that shuns the gaze,  
And specious voice, he lulls his hapless crew,  
Who mean their vows for Truth, nor deem them paid  
To such foul monster in her guise array'd.

## VIII.

Some Interest guides—some Passion goads along—

Some Pleasure leads in her alluring train—

Some Custom urges with a force as strong ;—

These rule the blindfold world, and give to men  
Opinions various, violent, and wrong ;

Which brings me to my subject back again ;  
The diff'rent views of people to relate,  
About our Theatre's untimely fate.

## IX.

The largest class in all the King's dominions

Are those who have no notions of their own,  
But having fish'd for orthodox opinions,

Adopt them with a grave and solemn tone ;  
Antiquity's admirers, custom's minions,

Who always are for letting things alone—  
These thought, good souls ! 'twas providential quite,  
That the thing fell by day, and not by night.

## X.

'Tis providential when your banker fails,  
     If you have only half your fortune there ;  
 Among your cattle when the rot prevails,  
     'Tis providential if it any spare :  
 'Tis providential, whatsoever ails,  
     It is not something worse, and I dare swear  
 'Tis providential when       \*       \*       \*       \*

                  \*           \*           \*           \*

## XI.

There happen'd some most wonderful escapes  
     Upon the morning when the Brunswick fell.  
 Some call'd it mere good luck in various shapes ;  
     But it 's more orthodox, and quite as well  
 To call it providential—I, perhaps,  
     May name a few, but should I try to tell  
 Each case of providential interference, (2)  
 Before I finish'd it would be a year hence.

## XII.

One hen-peck'd gentleman had set his mind  
On going there quite early, but his wife  
Most *providentially* was disinclin'd  
To hurry, so detain'd her dearest life,  
Who, as is usual in such case, repin'd,  
Grumbled and then gave way after short strife,  
And reach'd the Brunswick, sorely vex'd and bother'd,  
Just too late by ten minutes to be smother'd.

## XIII.

Another would have shar'd the gen'ral crunch,  
But *providentially* drank over-night  
A monstrous quantity of whiskey-punch,  
And waking in the morn bewilder'd quite,  
Incapable of breakfast or ev'n lunch,  
He stay'd at home to set his stomach right,  
Where bile and acid wag'd a horrid strife,  
And nursing thus his liver, sav'd his life !



## XIV.

Another had engag'd to meet a lady,  
    (Engagements which men punctually attend,)  
And at the time was sitting in a shady  
    Apartment with his fair and smiling friend,  
When, had he not this assignation made, he  
    Must then have met a brick-and-mortary end ;  
Thus evil may be done that good may come,  
A sentence which I us'd to think a hum.

## XV.

The Meritorians—the word being new,  
    I wish to make it clearly understood—  
'Tis to denote that class of persons who,  
    Whatever happens to themselves of good,  
Whate'er of ill to others, always view  
    Such matters in a calm complacent mood—  
These merely said, as at their ease they sate,  
“ Poor, wretched players, they deserv'd their fate !”

## XVI.

Deserves !—it is a pretty word, deserves !

This blessed world's more blessed inequality  
It serves to reconcile—it also serves

To paint as vice or virtue every quality  
Which stirs mankind, according to their nerves.

I 'll write a book to show its liberality ;  
The Book of Merit shall its title be,  
And in it you shall see—what you shall see.

## XVII.

First you shall see a handsome dedication,

Wherein unto my patron I will say,  
That though I know he hates all ostentation,

I 'm bound to choose as patron of my lay  
The most deserving man in all the nation,

And therefore I choose him ; and by the way  
I 'll dedicate to an Illustrious Person,  
Taking the highest peg to hang my verse on.

## XVIII.

Then you shall see—not knav'ry robed in scarlet,  
Nor honesty in rags—for these are common ;  
Nor prank'd in office some low-practis'd varlet  
By base intrigue—a sight to overcome one ;  
Nor ruling o'er a court some pamper'd harlot,  
Nor hypocrites in mitred robes,—lest some one  
Should dub me libeller, and damn the Book  
Of Merit for some truths he cannot brook.

## XIX.

But you shall mark upon your gaze encroach,  
Lacquied by liv'rymen, and proudly roll'd  
Through fawning crowds that smile at her approach,  
Some Queen of Fashion, with no charms but gold,  
And the poor trumpery that daubs her coach,  
And only pure as snow because as cold ;  
A prize upon the lists of wealth and rank,  
But in the book of Nature a mere blank.

## XX.

Near her, but oh ! how different in fate !

Behold a form with ev'ry grace endued ;  
That very loveliness hath marr'd her state,  
For ever tempted, only once subdued ;  
But, ah ! that once has touch'd her with the weight  
Of the world's scorn, and blighted all her good ;  
Such is the piteous portrait you shall see,  
And having seen it, then exclaim with me,

## XXI.

Curse on the savage and unbending law

Of stern society, that turns a speck  
In woman to an everlasting flaw !

And, far from whisp'ring us to save or check  
Her course in wantonness, but bids us draw  
Round her, like wretches hov'ring round a wreck,  
All that the wave hath spar'd, to spoil and plunder,  
And sink the noble vessel farther under.

## XXII.

This my first sketch: my next, perhaps,—but here,  
In this our land of pure establishment,  
Where worth 's the test of every man's career,  
I shall find subjects to my heart's content  
To fill the Book of Merit. All I fear  
Is that my fav'rite volume, which I meant  
To be a snug and pleasant little olio,  
Should, ere I publish, swell into a folio.

## XXIII.

The Fashionable World, that is to say,  
A set of people who each other meet  
At certain times and places ev'ry day,  
Fenc'd southward by St. James's royal seat,  
By the Park westward, eastward by the Hay-  
Market, and on the north by Oxford-street,  
Slaves of the great, forsaking for their smile  
All that is good, and following all that 's vile.

## XXIV.

(Fashion ! thou hast no head—no sov'reign name  
Round which to rally : once thou hadst a comely  
Ruler in Skeffington—then Brummell came ;  
The first is sunk or shrunk into Sir Lumley,  
Nor haunts the regions of his former fame,  
Save now and then an opera ;—and for Brumm'll, he  
Is gone to tie his neckcloth, and look gallows  
Across the water, and now reigns at Calais.)

## XXV.

The Fashionable World were quite thrown out  
By the discussions on this sad affair,  
And wonder'd what on earth 'twas all about.  
The Brunswick !—what is that ?—a playhouse !—where ?  
Out by—but here things grew more full of doubt,  
By vain attempts to point out Wellclose Square ;  
And so they merely said it was a pity  
That plays should e'er be acted in the city.

## XXVI.

When at the last their minds the meaning took,  
They were not with surprise or horror fill'd,  
Exclaiming with their exquisite calm look,  
"How fortunate that *Nobody* was kill'd!"  
For feeling's not a word in Fashion's book,  
And 'tis a principle that's quite instill'd  
In people truly fashionable, never  
To be surpris'd at any thing whatever.

## XXVII.

What they could mean by this same exclamation  
Of *Nobody*, seems hard to understand;  
But there are words which merely have relation,  
As "Anybody," "Ev'rybody," and  
"Nobody," to the bearer's rank and station.  
Byron in Juan takes the thing in hand,  
And since I cannot equal or surpass him,  
I merely shall refer—see Juan *passim*.

## XXVIII.

The great lords and great ladies of the land,  
Who never go to see an English play,  
Because their time is so discreetly plann'd,  
That with the ev'ning they begin their day,  
Thought it as well to issue their command  
For giving the Lyceum a survey,  
Where now and then they go to see a French play,  
Although they would not to see Yates or Wrench play.

## XXIX.

But most of all they thought it worth their while  
To order with a prudent liberality  
A full inspection of that sumptuous pile,  
Which is alone well qualified for quality,  
Where high-born beauties deign to sit and smile  
To soft Italian music and morality :  
'Tis odd, but in all great metropolis's  
Th' Italian Opera the seat of bliss is.



**XXX.**

Th' old women (by which phrase, pray don't suppose  
I merely speak of women that are old ;  
I mean of course to comprehend all those  
Who the opinions of old women hold ;) )  
Knowing that actors naturally close  
Their lives by being to the devil sold,  
Thought our poor players happily releas'd,  
By being taken ere their sins increas'd.

**XXXI.**

The "good old people" of the "good old days,"  
 Who hail no innovations with respect,  
 But lavish on the past their plenteous praise,  
 Ascrib'd it to the march of Intellect :  
 " If such new-fangled structures you will raise,  
 They must come down, what else can you expect?—  
 On your own heads," said Bigot, " be the blame !"  
 And he was right—for on their heads it came.

## XXXII.

Some people on the Architect cried shame—

Some on the Managers their strictures pass'd—

Some 'gainst the public folly did exclaim,

For hurrying there with such an eager haste.

Whom misery befalls men always blame

In this strange world in which our lot is cast,—

The cup of woe when once begun soon fills—

Misfortune is a magnet to all ills.

## XXXIII.

Thus differ'd different people in the way

They view'd it, each according to his creed ;

Which being sufficiently describ'd, I may

Mention one point in which they all agreed—

That when the building fell *they* were away,

Which they all thought most fortunate indeed.

For me, howe'er such calmness be despis'd,

I own I was not in the least surpris'd.

## XXXIV.

I never in my life was at a play,  
Or opera, or any public place,  
Seeing the people cramm'd in ev'ry way  
Just like a moving sea of head and face,  
But to myself I was quite sure to say,  
Now if some Fiend that hates the human race,  
For their destruction had a mortal blow meant,  
This of all others surely is the moment.

## XXXV.

If there was any thing that could be rated  
At all surprising in it, 'twas that our  
Great enemy the Fiend should not have waited  
With dev'lish patience till the ev'ning hour  
To strike his blow, instead of being sated  
With twelve or twenty victims of his pow'r ;  
Why, if the fool had not so strangely blunder'd,  
He might have had at least as many hundred !

## XXXVI.

'Tis nothing new to say, " Don't be astonish'd ;"  
I know that Horace says, " Nil admirari ;"  
But that great poet's friends should be admonish'd,  
That he lived in a time quite ordinary.  
He's gone, Heav'n rest him ! to be blest or punish'd,  
Unless his Pagan birth the case should vary ;  
But send him down (or up) to earth once more,  
His eyes would open wider than before.

## XXXVII.

The days we live in, are they not the date  
Of steam, and gas, and tunnels ? though the first  
Leads sometimes to a fire-and-watery fate,  
The next explodes, the last are apt to burst ;  
Likewise of stomach-pumps, which, when you've ate  
And drank, restore your hunger and your thirst ?  
Whereby in fact you eat and drink for ever,  
Which must extremely tantalize the liver.

## XXXVIII.

Have we not liv'd to know the " Great Unknown ?"

Have we not seen bad lines by Byron writ ?

Have we not seen some good by Wordsworth shown ?

Seen Dandy Recollections pass for wit ?

Seen the " Disowned," which, who would not disown ?

Seen Sayings, Doings, Highways, Byways, hit

What 's call'd our taste, and without number weary us,

'Till all their series make one really serious ?

## XXXIX.

Have we not been long since a ruin'd nation ?

First by the war, which laid the taxes on ;

Then by the peace, our trade's annihilation ;

Then by the paper currency, since gone ;

Then by the mines and mining speculation ;

Then by the panic, which produc'd a run

Upon our Banks, and now to quench all hope,

Are we not being ruin'd by the Pope ?

## XL.

Yet after all this ruin here we are,  
A jolly, thriving, paying, grumbling people ;  
The tide of wealth still flows through Temple Bar,  
The joyous bells ring out from many a steeple,  
Exulting Pleasure sits in Fashion's car,  
And if at times our debts should make us sleep ill,  
We pay a part, and having done our best,  
Like our good Government, we owe the rest.

## XLI.

Such are the wonders of our age and clime,  
Surpassing all the ancients ever knew ;  
But then the people of the olden time  
In miracles the moderns much outdo ;  
And strange it seems, (I wish 'twould also rhyme,)  
That while some certain volumes, old and new,  
Contain of miracles some thousand entries,  
We should not have had one in eighteen cent'ries.

## XLII.

This I'll resume hereafter, when I get  
Some fame and a few friends to cheer my heart with ;  
But for the present I must not forget  
That I already have a theme to start with,  
And that I'm something in the reader's debt ;  
So I'll conduct you back, and ere I part with  
My subject, show in my way of narration  
What happen'd in that scene of desolation.

## XLIII.

The Brunswick !—aye, the Brunswick !—we were there ;  
No, we were not—we are much better here ;  
But we were there in the mind's eye to stare  
With horror at the rude untimely bier  
Of men who little dream'd how they should fare  
That morn—'twas strange—but now without a fear,  
Now dead !—And yet compare this mode of dying  
With ling'ring long on splendid couches lying.

## XLIV.

What though attendants, when you groan'd or cough'd on,  
Were near to smooth the pillow where you lay,  
With all appliances your fate to soften,  
Kind looks that can do all but pain allay ;  
Physicians calling in, God knows how often !  
To take their fee, look solemn, and away ;—  
And then to die after six months in bed,  
I'd rather have the Brunswick on my head.

## XLV.

One good in dying thus we may discover,  
That people may repent—but then they won't ;  
They still keep hoping that they shall recover,  
And put it off until they find they don't ;  
And thus they trifle on till all is over ;  
It grieves me much, and I've thought much upon 't :  
But “ while there's life there's hope,” 'tis an old sentence,  
And while there's hope there is not much repentance.



## XLVI.

I cannot help digressing—'tis my fault ;  
But you 'll remember what I have to do  
Is of a kind to bring one to a halt,  
And is not quite so easy, though more new  
Than laying a noble in his family vault ;  
If that were all I should be quickly through  
The bus'ness, never needing a digression,  
For there would be the funeral procession,

## XLVII.

The pompous ranks, with mutes and pages swell'd ;  
The scarfs, the sables, in their proper keeping,  
The hearse beneath the awful velvet veil'd ;  
The vault where buried ancestors lay sleeping ;  
The mourners with white cambric kerchiefs held  
Close to their eyes to hide their—want of weeping ;  
With all this to describe and to reiterate,  
Methinks I should get forward at a pretty rate.

## XLVIII.

But now I really must my steps retrace,  
And on the Brunswick all my thoughts be centering.—  
In walk'd the Public, with its foolish face,  
(Where will it not walk in?) first slowly venturing,  
As if there still were danger in the place ;  
But what was most unusual in their entering,  
They walk'd in without any thing to pay,  
For that once only, as the play-bills say.

## XLIX.

And first the gen'ral impulse was to save—  
In human breasts that impulse is the strongest :  
Of all the sympathies which Nature gave,  
'Tis that which earliest wakes and lasts the longest.  
All enmities are buried in the grave,  
And fitly ;—if thou doubtest it, thou wrongest  
Our nature, which can ruin, injure, hate,  
But ne'er 'gainst man makes common cause with Fate.

## L.

There as they wond'ring stood, it soon appear'd  
That nothing would be manag'd as it ought,  
Unless the place were first of all well clear'd ;  
And so they sent for workmen with that thought,  
And workmen came, and as they came were cheer'd,  
As persons bringing help are, for they brought  
Mattocks, and crows, and pickaxes, and spades,  
And all the emblems of their various trades.

## LI.

And now there happen'd what we still must find  
Amidst of human kind the mass uneven,  
The man that day of most commanding mind  
Arose, and all the rest were led or driven  
By him, as one of a superior kind ; (2)  
A piece of patronage by Nature given,  
Who still selects for office the most meet,  
Reversing all the rules of Downing-street.

## LII.

Beneath his guidance and at his command  
They push'd aside the merely curious throng,  
Who came to gaze and take their idle stand,  
    (A common practice, and extremely wrong ;)  
And then they form'd a line on either hand,  
    Planting themselves at intervals along,  
And made a lane to pass the bodies freely,  
In comfortable order, quite genteelly.

## LIII.

And so they went to work ; and first of all,  
It sounded fearful, ev'n to practis'd ears,  
To hear the hammers sullenly let fall  
    On that which might be human, and their fears  
Prompted in ev'ry sound some suff'rer's call ;  
    The very workmen's eyes were fill'd with tears,  
Having to dig 'midst such a prodigality  
Of bricks and bodies, mortar and mortality.

## LIV.

But after having dug an hour or two,  
And carried out a tolerable load,  
Bus'ness, the common work they had to do,  
Soon reconcil'd them to their new abode ;  
And first familiar, then they cheerful grew ;  
At last they slid into their usual mode,  
And d—d the wounded for their cries and groaning ;—  
And then they laid the bodies out for owning.

## LV.

And so 'twas with the crowd—at first all fearful  
They stood in dread suspense without a word,  
And hearts were horror-struck, and eyes were tearful,  
As here and there the awful ruin stirr'd ;  
But as the work proceeded they grew cheerful,  
And ere three hours had pass'd you might have heard  
The crowd relapsing, as it always does,  
Into a gen'ral whisper, talk, and buzz.

# THE BRUNSWICK.

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## CANTO III.

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### I.

HOPE still deceiv'd is still before our eyes,  
Queen of the sanguine heart and youthful brain ;  
Her visions fade—she bids new visions rise—  
On on they come, still beauteous, and still vain,  
Dancing and sparkling with a thousand dyes,  
Till Mem'ry adds them to her motley train ;  
Like brightest streams ordain'd their course to take,  
Till swallow'd in the mass of some dull lake.

## II.

Eternal charm of Hope! behold her bless

Each man according to his different part ;

Warriors with glory, lovers with success,

The artist with the guerdon of his art,

All with their pictur'd forms of happiness :

Oh ! who would break the bubble to man's heart ;

Light tho' it were, and thin as airy dream,

That bears him up along life's hurrying stream.

## III.

And there, ev'n there, that dreary dome within,

'Mid relatives with breaking hearts, who came

To seek their bleeding and their mangled kin—

If they but found one spark of vital flame,

The light of Hope broke in upon the scene—

She was at hand her wonted pow'r to claim—

O'erleapt the present, whisper'd health and home,

And peaceful days and happiness to come.

## IV.

Return we to that mansion of despair :

I think I said they laid the bodies out  
For owning ;—yes—and you might witness there

All forms of mis'ry, from th' hysteric shout  
Of horror, to the wild and stupid stare

Worn by bewilder'd men, who try to doubt  
The truth of evils which they can't resist ;  
That latest struggle ere the rod is kist.

## V.

There while sad sisters came to seek their brothers,

Heart-fluttering hopes and fears their breasts divide ;  
Friends sought their friends there ; agonizing mothers

The sons of their affection and their pride,  
With on their clenched lips the pang which smothers,

But not subdues the grief that it would hide,  
And leaves us, far from lessening our care,  
A worse account to settle with despair.



## VI.

Now was the saddest task of all the day,  
The wounded from the dead to separate ;  
Those o'er whose features life yet seem'd to play,  
From those that had no more to fear from fate ;  
And men were marshall'd forth to bear away  
Upon their shoulders that disastrous weight ;  
On casual boards each haggard form they place,  
And with coarse sheeting hide the limbs and face.

## VII.

And thus they bore them to the hospitals  
On litters rudely form'd ; and, oh ! could those  
Who live in palaces and lofty halls,  
Meet, as they pass, this train of human woes,  
The eye of suffering which the heart appals,  
And all that marks life's struggle and its close,  
Coxcombs might catch one spark of gen'rous zeal,  
Folly might pause, and Fashion learn to feel.

## VIII.

Now as the sad procession passes by,  
On ev'ry side gives way the gaping crowd,  
With silent shudder and upraised eye,  
And pray'rs of benediction are bestow'd  
On each pale form conceal'd from public eye  
By that coarse cov'ring which might seem a shroud,  
Save that slow movement and faint heave for breath  
Give dreadful proof that there is life beneath.

## IX.

They bore their living load and laid them down,  
Crowding the crowded hospitals, which stand  
In ev'ry quarter of this mighty town.  
Here, England! is thy glory, that the hand  
Of fost'ring Pity smooths Affliction's frown ;  
This is the real greatness of thy land,  
Redeems thy canting and vain-glorious deeds,  
Thy doubtful morals and conflicting creeds.

## X.

For there within that truly hallow'd dome,  
Hallow'd by usefulness both day and night,  
Strangers, and they that know no other home,  
There enter by Compassion's holy right,  
The poor, the sick, the maim'd ; and as they come,  
Taste all they can of comfort and delight ;  
And ministering aid surrounds their beds,  
And soothes their pain, and props their drooping heads.

## XI.

There while the practis'd nurse her course pursues,  
And tracks her careful path from bed to bed,  
To mark disease give place to healthy hues,  
Or watch the silent change from sick to dead,  
The world in its odd way assists their views,  
And tables for some hundred guests are spread ;  
For still the English, whether saints or sinners,  
Are much most open-hearted at their dinners.

## XII.

So gorgeous feasts were held, where much was boasted  
By Englishmen of England's pow'r and fame ;  
Subscriptions follow'd, in whose lists were posted  
All those who put their money down—or name ;  
And those, the favour'd few, whose healths were toasted,  
Made all neat speeches, and all much the same,  
And acted well their often-acted parts,  
Touching their own, if not their hearer's hearts.

## XIII.

All this is great—and sure 'twere much amiss  
To give the Dev'l his due, yet not mankind :  
But great and glorious as our system is,  
Probe not too deeply—you may chance to find  
That vanity has much to do in this.  
A curious compound is the human mind,  
And ours a state where nothing 's very fix'd ;  
But men are men, alas ! and motives mix'd.

## XIV.

For here the tree of ostentation grows,  
And rear'd in pride yet bears a noble fruit ;  
Throughout the land its beauteous blossoms throws,  
And stretches far and wide its mighty root.  
Here lib'ral Bounty in profusion flows,  
Robing our vanity in Pity's suit,  
Receives the sick within its sheltering door,  
And spreads its ample shield above the poor.

## XV.

But this same pride that gives such blessings birth,  
Makes us in fact when we are met together,  
The most uncomfortable dogs on earth,  
With nought to talk about except the weather ;  
Each individual full of conscious worth  
Deems all the rest beneath him or beneath her,  
So that our meetings show like mutual fights,  
Where all the parties come to claim their rights.

## XVI.

Then we have virtue, which gives opportunity  
To its professors cheaply to supply it you ;  
So much religion as destroys all unity,  
And multiplies our teachers to satiety ;  
We are so moral, that of th' whole community  
One half is always out of good society ;  
Besides the wisdom which our ancestors  
Have left their sons, and we—shall leave to ours.

## XVII.

The Romans and the Saxons and the Danes  
Had all their share in us in former times,  
Besides th' indigenæ of our ancient plains,  
Whose praises may be read in bardic rhymes ;  
And this perhaps the mystery explains  
Of our odd virtues and our various crimes,  
Seeing we blend the Roman pride and boldness,  
The Danish dulness and the Saxon coldness.

## XVIII.

The Saxons too taught us to cheer our scenes  
With the free use of wassail and of wine :  
I don't exactly know what wassail means,  
But I dare say it 's something very fine ;  
And wine 's the mighty soul of Kings and Queens,  
Who never are so great as when they dine :  
Whence came our morals must remain a mystery—  
I do not find it any where in history.

## XIX.

We 're now the greatest people upon earth,  
As all must know who 've thought at all about it ;  
We have been taught so from our earliest birth,  
By all around us, and we cannot doubt it ;  
Our loyal papers all proclaim our worth,  
Our players rant it, and our people shout it ;  
For various things we 're famous, but the chief  
Is our great bullishness and love of beef.

## XX.

In the first place John Bull the nation's nam'd ;  
The name of Beef-eaters our yeomen take ;  
Throughout the world our prowess is proclaim'd  
For cooking and for eating a beef-steak ;  
Beef makes our warriors and prize-fighters famed,  
Who fight for beef, and call it glory's sake ;  
And when our happiness is past control,  
We always kill an ox, and roast him whole.

## XXI.

No wonder that we groan beneath the weight  
Of so much old as well as modern ware,  
Besides our taxes which increase of late,  
Our foggy atmosphere and frosty air :  
'Tis vain to murmur, but, all-ruling Fate !  
Hadst thou dispos'd my destiny elsewhere,  
I could have liv'd content, and deem'd well lost  
Our virtues, morals, taxes, fog, and frost !



## XXII.

For I must own I love a smile-clad face,  
And that sweet courtesy which life beguiles,  
In happy regions of a warmer race ;  
And therefore, O majestic British Isles,  
I 'll chaunt your glories in another place,  
And hasten to some sunny land of smiles,  
Where things go on less nobly, but more prettily,  
Gay, pleasant France, sweet Spain, or glowing Italy !

## XXIII.

All sorts of people from all sorts of places,  
Besides the few that were impell'd by grief,  
Came with their staring, wond'ring, foolish faces,  
To mark the spot where death had been so brief ;  
All feeling it their duty, as the phrase is,  
To offer consolation and relief ;  
But to describe their real view, in short,  
They came, " éprouver les sensations fortes."

## XXIV.

'Tis touching, this destruction of humanity,  
Let the blow take whatever shape it will ;  
For first, it is a lesson against vanity,  
Stronger than can be taught by human skill ;  
Then it beguiles us much of life's inanity,  
And doth the void with fine excitement fill ;  
It puts the heart in an amazing flutter  
To see one's best friend carried on a shutter.

## XXV.

This love of strong sensations makes a sight  
Of woe in man or brute, whate'er it be ;  
Draws thousands to a bull-bait, or a fight,  
Steeling the heart 'gainst shapes of misery.  
'Tis this which peoples Newgate's dreadful height,  
When some poor wretches are dragg'd forth to die,  
With eager multitudes, a horrid rout,  
All to relieve the sufferers, no doubt !

## XXVI.

I deprecate all pleasures of this sort,  
But most my female readers I advise  
To shun, not seek, the crowded anxious court,  
Nor on the trembling culprit fix their eyes;  
It is to make another's woe their sport.  
Domitian began by teasing flies,  
But came to smoth'ring wretches for his pleasure,  
And other cruelties beyond all measure.

## XXVII.

Full well I know, my readers fair, that you  
Must, being human, some excitement find;  
Some take to literature, and turn blue—  
Some with accomplishments amuse the mind—  
Some choose religion—I know one or two  
Extraordinary cases of the kind—  
Some find their husbands' friends extremely handy—  
Some take to metaphysics;—some to brandy—

## XXVIII.

In short a thousand methods are pursued  
To cheat the dull vacuity of living ;  
But that which does most evil and least good  
Is this perception of another's grieving ;  
A taste which cannot be too soon subdued :—  
Pray, gentle ladies, take the hint I 'm giving ;  
I seldom moralize, and never preach  
But when I really have some good to teach.

## XXIX.

The two great passions of the English nation  
Are curiosity and love of scandal ;  
The first picks up materials for narration,  
And to the second is a sort of handle ;  
It was the first which brought on this occasion  
So many people to the Brunswick ; and all  
For what ?—the suff'ers wanted air and space—  
*They* spoilt the air and chok'd up all the place.

## XXX.

'Mongst them were sev'ral surgeons to note down  
How subjects look'd in such a situation ;  
Painters to study their last dying frown ;  
Pickpockets calmly follow'd their vocation :—  
The newspaper pathetics of the town,  
With most alarming notes of admiration,  
Were hard at work with " Horrible to state !"  
" Awful catastrophe !" " Appalling fate !"

## XXXI.

The architects, too, could not keep aloof,—  
Not that the suff'ers mov'd their sympathies ;  
Their grief was for the building—a fine proof  
How much the sons of Art their mistress prize ;  
And the sweet structure of that iron roof  
Call'd up a tear in scientific eyes,  
That what the Artist deem'd his best and last trophy,  
Should lead to such a horrible catastrophe.

## XXXII.

A Dandy came the next, and he perhaps  
Was best of all, as being most absurd,—  
One of those whisker'd and mustachio'd chaps,  
Whose look 's enough—they need not speak a word—  
Who walk about the world like modern maps,  
Where all discoveries that have occur'd  
In Folly's realms are carefully laid down,  
And publish'd for th' instruction of the Town.

## XXXIII.

A cane was in his hand, upon whose tip  
An eye-glass shone, which would have marr'd his sight,  
If used ; he daintily contrived to sip  
Both a cigar and snuff, and thus unite  
The two tobaccos on his upper lip ;  
He was to all exceedingly polite,  
And only begg'd the people not to smear him  
With these unseemly things they brought so near him.

## XXXIV.

I too was there, revolving in my mind  
How to enlighten, tickle, and surprise you ;  
Collecting what seem'd fit in ev'ry kind,  
For some great moral purpose to advise you ;  
And now there's but one thing remains behind  
Of which I think it needful to apprise you,  
And that relates entirely to the Coroner,  
To whom I beg you will not lend a foreign ear.

## XXXV.

But first of all, perhaps, it would be wise  
To let you know what means a Coroner ;  
Know, then, whenever any body dies,  
It is a man who makes a legal stir,  
Enquiring with a jury of Paul Pry's  
Into all facts respecting him or her ;  
Unless the same died quietly in bed—  
For then the law permits you to be dead.

## XXXVI.

They sit in deep deliberation, putting

All sorts of questions to all persons present ;  
Receiving evidence, and then rebutting,

In manner neither relevant nor pleasant ;  
Mistaking all the facts, and bad jokes cutting ;

'Tis curious, but our ancestors laid stress on 't,  
However heads or bodies may be hack'd awry,  
A verdict makes the thing more satisfactory.

## XXXVII.

Well, there they sate—and there they'd still be killing

The nation's time and patience, had not they  
Sent to the Duke, to know if he were willing

They should be paid, who in his slap-bang way  
Replied, " Pay—Inquest !—damme, not a shilling ;"

Which brought their verdict in without delay,—  
'Twas this, divested of its legal pride,  
" The roof fell in, and so the people died."



## XXXVIII.

And so the matter clos'd, and by this token  
Our builders will take warning, I should guess,—  
And so there 's been a deal of nonsense spoken,  
And some loose rambling stanzas sent to press,  
And so there have been arms, legs, heads too broken ;—  
And so there is a Theatre the less,  
Which after all 's the sting of the whole business,  
And gives me, when I think on 't, much uneasiness.

## XXXIX.

A Theatre is such a pleasant place,  
And holds you snugly in all sorts of weather,  
Charm'd with the whim of many a comic face,  
Which makes the heart as buoyant as a feather,  
With motion, music, beauty, smiles, and grace :—  
It really is delightful altogether ;  
And though my serious friends lament my sins,  
I 'm happy when the overture begins.

## LX.

And yet, methinks, the pleasure of a play  
Is not so striking after as when newly it's  
Presented to our view ; like all that's gay,  
It palls upon the sated sense ; and truly it's  
A sad thing to remember in one's day  
Some five-and-twenty Romeos and Juliets,  
And all their stabbing, swearing, poisoning, loving,  
Seen for the hundredth time is far less moving.

## XLI.

Another thought, too, in that brilliant sphere  
Will sometime operate our mirth to mar,  
To see how chang'd from many a former year,  
When they and we were younger than we are,  
The first companions of our lives appear,  
It gives one's pleasant thoughts a frightful jar ;  
An early friend whose eye has lost its glimmer,  
Reminds us that our own are somewhat dimmer.

## XLII.

This is a serious thing, though mention'd lightly,  
For would you mark where Time has play'd his part,  
With rudest touch and havoc most unsightly,  
Full often hath he struck his keenest dart  
In breasts where Pleasure's lamp hath burnt most brightly  
The sanguine-temper'd soul, the feeling heart,  
The quick of nerve, the sensitive of frame,  
Where ev'ry passion rages like a flame :—

## XLIII.

For not ev'n Poverty, though that must grieve us,  
Nor loss of that for which we have been hoping,  
Nor finding those we thought our friends deceive us,  
Nor ev'n a wife brought back from her eloping,  
Nor relatives who die and nothing leave us,  
Nor all the various ills that lead to moping,  
Wear out the nerves and brain with such facility  
As that extreme and dread susceptibility.

## XLIV.

It is the charm, which, whether good or ill  
Betide us, arms the stroke with all its power—  
The subtle alchymy which doth distill  
Pleasure from beauty, sweetness from the flow'r,  
And doth the soul with all their essence fill,  
Length'ning full oft the moment to an hour,  
By that intensity which those who feel  
Cannot impart, subdue, nor yet conceal.

## XLV.

It roves throughout Creation's ample round,  
Breathes in the fragrance of the flow'ry June,  
By day is in the lovely landscape found,  
By night adores the lonely wand'ring moon ;  
It vibrates in the motion of a sound  
To the sweet air of some remember'd tune,  
But pours its most impassion'd, tend'rest tale  
At Beauty's shrine, a cheek half pink, half pale.

## XLVI.

The heart its centre is, each sense its source,  
Its motion rapid as th' electric dart,  
Almost as irresistible its force ;  
The nerves, its winged ministers, impart  
All things that enter by their magic course  
Right onward in an instant to the heart,  
And there they tyrannize, delight, destroy,  
O'erpow'ring with excess of grief or joy,

## XLVII.

As speeds that rapid lightning through the frame ;—  
Philosophy herself, who reigns for ever,  
Thron'd in the soul, and lit with learning's flame,  
Whose province is to scrutinize and sever  
Whate'er we feel, ev'n she, exalted dame,  
Unless by Nature gifted with 't, can never,  
With all the mind's accumulated force,  
Divine its nature, or describe its course.

## XLVIII.

Such is it—such its pow'r is ever lightning  
Across the path of those who feel its sway,  
All pangs that dwell in human bosoms heightening,  
As hate, love, fear, joy, sorrow, will have way,  
Blackening each sable hue, each gay one brightening;  
Thus it anticipates thy touch, Decay!  
And leaves us blighted, blasted, at the time  
When men of calmer mould are in their prime.

## XLIX.

Alas! this is not all; though to be torn  
And tortur'd in this world, our present home,  
For thoughts wherewith we could not but be born,  
Might seem of ills a tolerable sum;  
The future is as much or more forlorn,  
For all Divines to this conclusion come,  
That if we let our passions triumph o'er us,  
They spoil our present life, and that before us.

## L.

Sermons, no doubt, are things beyond all price,  
And so are books that teach us to be good,  
Lectures abounding with distinctions nice,  
Although much easier read than understood ;  
And grave good men that give us good advice ;—  
But a calm pulse and a smooth flowing blood,  
Ne'er up at Fever-heat, nor down at Zero,  
Are the true parts that make your moral hero.

## L.I.

And therefore, when I pray, I pray for this,  
To be preserv'd free from the senses' riot ;  
And if I find my thoughts too bent on bliss,  
I moderate my raptures with thin diet ;  
I also should not take it much amiss  
The cherub Patience would instil his quiet  
Into my frame, which, with a mind unruffled,  
Might serve to make the ills of life seem muff'd.

## LII.

Perhaps you smile to hear what I am saying

Of pray'r, and think that people in a pulpit

Alone are qualified to talk of praying :

I've heard as much before, but ne'er could gulp it,  
Having myself, albeit less often straying

Into a church, than staring on a full pit,  
A creed—I'll sum it up in these few lines,  
Which here I dedicate to all Divines.

## LIII.

I do believe in one Almighty Being,

Who did create all matter, sense, and mind ;

I cannot in that doctrine be agreeing,

Which deems he made for misery mankind ;  
And since he could not make without foreseeing,

I think that he their happiness design'd :

\* \* \* \* \*



## LIV.

I do believe the soul shall live for ever,  
As much as I believe the body dies ;  
I do believe, when soul and body sever,  
The spirit to some purer region flies,  
Where, as below, it may by just endeavour  
Grow by degrees more happy, good, and wise,  
Till, soon or later, all shall blest become  
In one eternal intellectual home.

## LV.

Eternal !—aye, eternal.—Who hath gaz'd  
Upon inspiring Nature, and not felt,  
As now her sterner scenes his sense amaz'd,  
And now her softer could his bosom melt,  
Himself by mingling with her glories rais'd !—  
She is the picture, whose great Master dealt  
Some wonders forth, but with a mightier skill  
Left more untold, the secret soul to fill !

## LVI.

Why do we gaze upon the lonely beach  
And broken cliff we never saw before,  
And feel a joy beyond the pow'r of speech,  
In the wild sands, and on the summit hoar ;  
Why does the vast, th' eternal Ocean teach  
Deep lessons, which with Heav'n unite us more  
Than all the world's temptation and its pow'r  
Can work upon us in their happiest hour ?

## LVII.

Nor let external Nature bound thy range ;  
Look how the soul of man hath been endued ;  
The sympathy which binds in union strange  
Congenial souls, the links of gratitude,  
Of mutual minds the blissful interchange,  
The pow'r of saving, joy of doing good,  
The solemn farewell, the sweet recognition,  
And all the nobler types of man's condition.

## LVIII.

But oh ! beyond all these, if thou hast known  
What 'tis to have thy heart's affections plac'd  
On some fond being, whom thou lov'st alone  
With tender ardour, passionate yet chaste,  
Whose love to thee is dearer than a throne ;  
If e'er the look of rapture thou hast trac'd  
In th' all-confiding, happy, conscious eye—  
Think, think of these, and *feel* thou canst not die !

## LIX.

But I am wand'ring—I must call you back  
To our old theme—that is to say, I must  
Get off my Pegasus and resume my hack ;  
Which being easy riding, I will just  
Inform you what I did out of mere lack  
Of pastime, to rub off September's rust,  
Being last autumn left alone in London,  
A sort of state which makes me feel more undone

## LX.

Than any other in this world of ours—

It is not that I hate to be alone,

Where solitude is proper, among flow'rs

For instance, or in pleasant woods o'ergrown  
With intertwining boughs, or shady bow'rs,

There I am quite at home, for be it known,  
Sketching and song among my pleasures are,  
And now and then I touch "the light guitar."

## LXI.

But splendour, show, and mirth, are London's graces,

And solitude is out of place and wrong.

I love the people and their busy places,

I love the cheerful ballad-singer's song,

I love the thronging crowds and bustling places,

I love the carriages that roll along,

And love still more, I hope it is no sin,

The charming, conscious eyes that roll within.

## LXII.

A carriage hath a soft voluptuous motion,  
Which wakes within the fair forms it encloses  
A feeling like the gentle swell of ocean,  
That all to languor and to love disposes ;  
The half-drawn pink-silk blind too spreads a notion  
Of heightening o'er their lilies and their roses,  
And gives their loveliness a *tout ensemble*,  
Which makes the eye adore and the heart tremble.

## LXIII.

They sit like Beauty on triumphal car,  
Or rather let me say a moving throne,  
From which they conquer hearts, and follow'd far  
By looks on which their loveliness hath shone,  
For ere we can make question who they are,  
The brief temptation is pass'd by and gone,  
And leaves us standing in a sweet surprise,  
And staring after them with all our eyes.

## LXIV.

Oh ! who hath not beheld once in his days  
Some momentary form of beauty bright,  
That came by chance upon his charmed gaze,  
Yet rais'd his soul to visions of delight ;  
Some being, whose form once seen for ever stays  
Within his mem'ry, like a spot of light,  
Mingling with all he knows of joy or care,  
Crowning his bliss, and charming his despair.

## LXV.

But I perceive that I romantic grow,  
And all about a lady in a carriage.  
And wherefore should I not ? Such sights ere now  
Have led most men to love, and some to marriage.  
Bright features are they in that charming show,  
Which, without meaning country to disparage,  
Makes cities preferable to rural plains,  
Ladies to lasses, gentlemen to swains.

## LXVI.

Sweet as the freshness of the morning air  
Is (I am told) to those who get up soon ;  
Sweet as repose to him that 's full of care ;  
Sweet as "sweet home" (the thing and not the tune;)   
Sweet as the light step of a lady fair ;  
Sweet as the rising of the gentle moon ;  
Sweet as the hive to the returning bee,  
So sweet, oh ! London, are thy haunts to me !

## LXVII.

And, therefore, it may be suppos'd how very  
Disconsolate I was to find myself,  
Just in the spot where I had been so merry,  
Laid by like an old book upon a shelf,  
Or like a lagging trav'ller, lone and weary,  
Or like in woods a solitary elf,  
Or like the man who leaves a party latest,  
Which is of melancholy bores the greatest.

## LXVIII.

You can't imagine, you who have not been  
In London during August and September,  
How desolate it is, how chang'd a scene,  
From what in May or June you may remember.  
Ride out—there 's not a creature to be seen ;  
Go to your Club—you are the only member :  
They take the streets *up*, and the houses *down*,  
And make a shocking spectacle of Town.

## LXIX.

The useful classes, by which phrase no doubt  
You 'll understand the dwellers in such places  
As Grosvenor Square, Hyde Park, and thereabout,  
Are ruralizing at some public races ;  
Or if they can't afford so gay a bout,  
They cover up their furniture and faces,  
And live in dark back rooms, a speculation  
Which saves their money and their reputation.



## LXX.

St. James's royal church, pronounced by all  
Centre of Fashion and true Piety,  
In vain on Sunday sounds its sacred call;  
The Op'ra House glares hopeless on the eye;  
There is no Pasta pasted on the wall  
In letters three feet long ;—and, by the bye,  
How strange to write so much, yet not give one tag  
To th' all-enrapturing and all-capturing Sontag !

## LXXI.

Sweet is our Sontag, numberless her charms ;  
Sweet is her shape, her way of moving sweet ;  
Sweet are her voice, her eyes, her fair round arms,  
To her smooth ancles, and her pretty feet ;  
Where'er she goes she kindles love's alarms,  
Sees in her train admiring Princes meet,  
Receives the homage of a thousand lands,  
Reigns in our hearts, and walks upon our hands. (3)

## LXXII.

But I was going to tell you what I did:—

They told me I must see the Brunswick ruin;

So I, who always do as I am bid,

Went there, of course, to see what they were doing.

I found the workmen toiling to get rid

Of the still-standing rubbish, and then going

To build instead on 't.—What do you suppose?

But no—you 'll never guess it—so here goes:—

## LXXIII.

Why since to lose a theatre their fate is,

Instead of such gay places to beguile 'em,

If Parliament will give consent, they say 'tis

Intended to build up a huge Asylum, (4)

Where sailors may be taught religion gratis:

The thing of course will pass, it's such a vile hum,

And all the papers will their columns fill

With " Brunswick-British-Tar-Salvation-Bill."

## LXXIV.

Reader, farewell ! or rather plain good-bye—

Farewell 's a theme which ev'ry poet sings,  
And on that subject, if I wish'd it, I

No doubt could say some very pretty things  
About the fainting heart and the dim eye ;

But now I must fold in my wand'ring wings ;  
Besides, we 're strangers, and such terms would be  
Much too affectionate 'twixt you and me.

## LXXV.

I 've giv'n you here a miscellaneous dose

Of verse, with here and there an asterisk,  
Because I know when readers meet with those

Queer things, it makes their fancies much more brisk  
Than aught which they might read in verse or prose :

Hereafter should you like another frisk,  
Both Hack and Pegasus in their best array  
Are at your service on some future day.

## NOTES.

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### NOTE 1.

*Limbs, ownerless, were scatter'd all about.*—P. 33.

See “An Accurate Account of the Destruction of the Brunswick Theatre, &c. published by J. Robins and Sons, Tooley-street, Borough. 1828.”

“Near this place a man discovered a hand. An arm was now visible, and the side of a face. A gentleman present seeing a boot as they were digging, said, ‘It is Mr. Maurice’s?’”

### NOTE (2.)

*“By him, as one of a superior kind.”*—P. 42.

For the lead taken by a person of the name of Smith on this occasion, see p. 16, et seq. of the same pamphlet.

## NOTE (3.)

*" Reigns in our hearts, and walks upon our hands."—P. 102.*

Some German gentlemen, as this lady descended the steps of one of their public places, put their hands for her to step upon, to save the feet of their idol from the cold or wet!—*Allgemeine Zeitung.*

## NOTE (4.)

*" If Parliament will give consent, they say 'tis  
Intended to build up a huge asylum.—P. 103.*

See an account in the Nautical Miscellany for 1828, descriptive of the projected building.

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